



# Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 5122.5

September 27, 2000

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DA&M

SUBJECT: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASD(PA))

- References:
- (a) Title 10, United States Code
  - (b) DoD Directive 5122.5, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs," March 29, 1996 (hereby canceled)
  - (c) Executive Order 12958, "Classified National Security Information," April 17, 1995
  - (d) [DoD Directive 5410.18](#), "Community Relations," July 3, 1974
  - (e) through (k), see enclosure 1

## 1. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

Under the authority vested in the Secretary of Defense in reference (a), this Directive reissues reference (b) to update the responsibilities, functions, relationships, and authorities of the ASD(PA) as prescribed herein.

## 2. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense (hereafter referred to as the "the DoD Components").

## Report Documentation Page

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### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASD(PA)) is the principal staff assistant and advisor to the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of Defense for DoD news media relations, public information, internal information, community relations, public affairs and visual information training, and audiovisual matters and shall:

3.1. Develop policies, plans, and programs in support of DoD objectives and operations.

3.2. Ensure a free flow of news and information to the news media, the general public, the internal audiences of the Department of Defense, and the other applicable fora, limited only by national security constraints as authorized by Executive Order 12958 (reference (c)) and valid statutory mandates or exemptions. Enclosures 2 and 3 delineate principles that guide the Department regarding public access to information and media coverage of DoD activities.

3.3. Ensure DefenseLINK (<http://www.defenselink.mil>) is operated and maintained as the official primary point of access to DoD information on the Internet in accordance with Web Site Administration Policies and Procedures established by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence.

3.4. Act as the sole spokesperson and release authority for DoD information and audiovisual materials to news media representatives; evaluate news media requests for DoD support and cooperation; and determine applicable levels of DoD participation.

3.5. Establish and exercise procedures for the administrative management, activation, and direction of the DoD National Media Pool.

3.6. Oversee and coordinate, as necessary, the activities of the DoD National Media Pool for potential use in military contingency operations and other activities.

3.7. Monitor, evaluate, and develop systems, standards, and procedures for the administration and management of DoD-approved policies, plans, and programs.

3.8. Issue public affairs guidance to the DoD Components.

3.9. Participate with the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer) in planning, programming, and budgeting activities, as required.

3.10. Promote coordination, cooperation, and mutual understanding among the DoD Components and with the other Federal, State, and local agencies, and the civilian community.

3.11. Serve on boards, committees, and other groups, and represent the Secretary of Defense outside of the Department.

3.12. Prepare speeches, public statements, congressional testimony, articles for publication, and other materials for public release by the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, and other selected DoD and White House officials, as required.

3.13. Serve as official point of contact for public and media activities by the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense; develop short- and long-range plans to communicate their policies and programs; and support the execution of such plans, including advance programming and event coordination with other Agencies of Government and with private, public and media organizations.

3.14. Receive, analyze, and reply to inquiries on DoD policies, programs, or activities that are received from the general public, either directly or from the other Government Agencies. Prepare, and provide to the referring office, replies to inquiries from the general public that are forwarded from the Congress and the White House.

3.15. Evaluate, coordinate, approve and provide policy guidance regarding:

3.15.1. Requests for DoD support and cooperation in programs involving relations with the public, national associations, and non-governmental organizations, consistent with DoD Directive 5410.18 and DoD Instruction 5410.19 (references (d) and (e)). Such programs include, but are not limited to, those involving DoD participation in national and international events in the United States and U.S. territories such as Presidential Inaugurations, International Olympics, and other events receiving national media coverage.

3.15.2. Requests by news media representatives or other non-DoD personnel for travel in military carriers for public affairs purposes, in accordance with DoD Instruction 5435.2 (reference (f)).

3.15.3. All proposed public affairs guidance, plans, and annexes.

3.16. Provide DoD assistance to non-Government and entertainment-oriented

motion picture, television, and video productions consistent with DoD Instruction 5410.16 (reference (g)).

3.17. Evaluate and coordinate the DoD responses to requests for speakers received by the Department and, as required, assist in scheduling, programming, and drafting speeches for the participation of qualified personnel.

3.18. Develop, coordinate and oversee the implementation of public affairs policy and plans for DoD participation in activities supporting U.S. international public information programs, in coordination with appropriate DoD officials.

3.19. Perform such other functions as the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense may prescribe.

#### **4. RELATIONSHIPS**

4.1. In the performance of assigned functions and responsibilities, the ASD(PA) shall:

4.1.1. Report directly to the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

4.1.2. Exercise authority, direction, and control over the American Forces Information Service, in accordance with DoD Directive 5122.10 (reference (h)).

4.1.3. Coordinate and exchange information with other OSD officials, the Heads of the DoD Components, and Federal Departments and Agencies having collateral or related functions.

4.1.4. Use existing facilities and services of the Department of Defense and other Federal Agencies, when possible, to avoid duplication and achieve maximum efficiency and economy.

4.1.5. Maintain liaison with, and provide assistance to, representatives of the news media, non-Government and entertainment-oriented industry, and members of the public seeking information on the responsibilities and functions in section 3., above.

4.2. Other OSD officials and the Heads of the DoD Components shall coordinate with the ASD(PA) on all matters related to the authorities, responsibilities and functions assigned in this Directive.

## 5. AUTHORITIES

The ASD(PA) is hereby delegated authority to:

5.1. Issue DoD Instructions, Publications, and one-time directive-type memoranda, consistent with DoD 5025.1-M (reference (i)), which carry out policies approved by the Secretary of Defense in assigned fields of responsibility. Instructions to the Military Departments shall be issued through the Secretary of the Military Department concerned. Instructions to the Combatant Commands on public affairs matters shall be issued directly to the Commanders of the Combatant Commands. DoD Instructions that have operational implications shall be coordinated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

5.2. Obtain reports, information, advice, and assistance, consistent with the DoD policy and criteria of DoD Directive 8910.1 (reference (j)), as necessary.

5.3. Communicate directly with the Heads of the DoD Components. The channel of communications with the Combatant Commands on public affairs matters shall be between the ASD(PA) and the Commanders of the Combatant Commands. Communications that have operational implications shall be coordinated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff consistent with DoD Directive 5400.13 (reference (k)). Joint Staff communications that have public affairs policy or guidance implications shall be coordinated with the ASD(PA).

5.4. Communicate with the other Federal Departments and Agencies, the representatives of the Legislative Branch, the news media, the non-Government and entertainment-oriented industry, and the members of the public.

5.5. Establish arrangements for DoD participation in those non-DoD Government programs for which the ASD(PA) has been assigned primary staff cognizance.

5.6. Act as the sole agent at the Seat of Government for the release of official DoD information for dissemination through any form of public information media. This may be delegated to DoD Components, as appropriate.

5.7. Establish accreditation criteria and serve as the approving and issuing authority for credentials for news gathering media representatives traveling with coverage of official DoD activities.

5.8. Approve military participation in public exhibitions, demonstrations, and ceremonies of national or international significance.

5.9. Portions of the authorities listed in this section may be delegated to DoD Components as appropriate to that Agency or Service.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Directive is effective immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rudy de Leon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rudy" being more prominent than the last name "de Leon".

**Rudy de Leon**  
**Deputy Secretary of Defense**

Enclosures - 3

- E1. References, continued
- E2. Principles of Information
- E3. Statement of DoD Principles for News Media Coverage of DoD Operations

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES, continued

- (e) [DoD Instruction 5410.19](#), "Armed Forces Community Relations," July 19, 1979
- (f) [DoD Instruction 5435.2](#), "Delegation of Authority to Approve Travel In and Use of Military Carriers for Public Affairs Purposes," April 25, 1975
- (g) [DoD Instruction 5410.16](#), "DoD Assistance to Non-Government , Entertainment-Oriented Motion Picture, Television, and Video Productions," January 26, 1988
- (h) [DoD Directive 5122.10](#), "American Forces Information Service (AFIS)," February 14, 1995
- (i) [DoD 5025.1-M](#), "DoD Directives System Procedures," August 1994
- (j) [DoD Directive 8910.1](#), "Management and Control of Information Requirements," June 11, 1993
- (k) [DoD Directive 5400.13](#), "Joint Public Affairs Operations," January 9, 1996



## E2. ENCLOSURE 2

### PRINCIPLES OF INFORMATION

#### E2.1. INFORMATION

It is DoD policy to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, the Congress, and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens shall be answered quickly. In carrying out that DoD policy, the following principles of information shall apply:

E2.1.1. Information shall be made fully and readily available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release is precluded by national security constraints or valid statutory mandates or exceptions. The "Freedom of Information Act" will be supported in both letter and spirit.

E2.1.2. A free flow of general and military information shall be made available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the Armed Forces and their dependents.

E2.1.3. Information will not be classified or otherwise withheld to protect the Government from criticism or embarrassment.

E2.1.4. Information shall be withheld when disclosure would adversely affect national security, threaten the safety or privacy of U.S. Government personnel or their families, violate the privacy of the citizens of the United States, or be contrary to law.

E2.1.5. The Department of Defense's obligation to provide the public with information on DoD major programs may require detailed Public Affairs (PA) planning and coordination in the Department of Defense and with the other Government Agencies. Such activity is to expedite the flow of information to the public; propaganda has no place in DoD public affairs programs.

### E3. ENCLOSURE 3

#### STATEMENT OF DoD PRINCIPLES FOR NEWS MEDIA

E3.1.1. Open and independent reporting shall be the principal means of coverage of U.S. military operations.

E3.1.2. Media pools (limited number of news media who represent a larger number of news media organizations for news gatherings and sharing of material during a specified activity), are not to serve as the standard means of covering U.S. military operations. However, they sometimes may provide the only means of early access to a military operation. In this case, media pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity (in 24 to 36 hours, when possible). The arrival of early-access media pools shall not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in the area.

E3.1.3. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be applicable for specific events, such as those at extremely remote locations or where space is limited.

E3.1.4. Journalists in a combat zone shall be credentialed by the U.S. military and shall be required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect U.S. Armed Forces and their operations. Violation of the ground rules may result in suspension of credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations shall make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with U.S. military operations.

E3.1.5. Journalists shall be provided access to all major military units. Special operations restrictions may limit access in some cases.

E3.1.6. Military PA officers should act as liaisons, but should not interfere with the reporting process.

E3.1.7. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders should be instructed to permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft when possible. The military shall be responsible for the transportation of pools.

E3.1.8. Consistent with its capabilities, the military shall supply PA officers with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and shall make those facilities available, when possible, for filing independent coverage. If

Government facilities are unavailable, journalists, as always, shall file by any other means available. The military shall not ban communications systems operated by news organizations, but electromagnetic operational security in battlefield situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

E3.1.9. Those principles in paragraph E3.1.8.,above, shall apply as well to the operations of the standing DoD National Media Pool system.